

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05

H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02

SS-15 ICA-11 AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /092 W

-----046529 190001Z /15

R 181233Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7043

INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES 6407

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM AR PINT PINS

SUBJ: HUMAN RIGHTS ROUNDUP: HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS

### 1. THE MOTHERS GROUP----

THE MOTHERS OF THE PLAZA DE MAYO ARE BEING ALLOWED BY POLICE AUTHORITIES TO HOLD SHORT, PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATIONS EACH THURSDAY AFTERNOON. THE ARRESTS OF OVER 200 MOTHERS LAST OCTOBER, THE DISAPPEARANCE OF 13 MOTHERS' GROUP SUPPORTERS IN DECEMBER, THE POLICE CHASING OF MOTHERS OFF THE PLAZA IN MID-MARCH AND THE COUNTER DEMONSTRATION HARASSMENT OF THE MOTHERS DURING THE MUNDIAL ALL PRODUCED ADVERSE PUBLICITY TO THE GOVERNMENT ABROAD. MANY LOCAL OBSERVERS WRONGLY BELIEVED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD RESUME ITS EFFORTS TO HALT THE MOTHERS' THURSDAY DEMONSTRATIONS ONCE THE WORLD CUP ENDED. HOWEVER, AFTER THEIR EXTENSIVE JUNE TV EXPOSURE THE MOTHERS HAVE BECOME AN INTERNATIONAL SYMBOL OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE IN ARGENTINA AND THIS HAS PERHAPS GIVEN THEM A MEASURE PATINA OF PROTECTION.

THE NUMBERS OF MOTHERS DEMONSTRATING APPEARS TO HAVE STABILIZED AT ABOUT 100 IN THE RAIN AND  
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AROUND 200 ON SUNNY DAYS. HOWEVER, THE MOTHERS GROUP HAS SWELLED OVER 300 IN THE PAST WHEN IT APPEARED THAT THE CHANCE OF POLICE HARASSMENT WAS MINIMAL OR WHEN THE FAMILIES "GRAPE-VINE" SIGNALLED SOME IMPENDING PROGRESS. THAT THE MOTHERS ARE BECOMING AN ESTABLISHED PART OF THE LOCAL SCENE IS UNDERSCORED BY THE FACT THAT

SEVERAL SPANISH LANGUAGE METROPOLITAN DAILIES HAVE RUN  
SHORT STORIES ON THE MOTHERS' GATHERINGS LATELY.

2. FAMILIARES DE DESAPARECIDOS----

THE ORGANIZATION OF FAMILY MEMBERS OF DIS-  
APPEARED AND DETAINED PERSONS (FDD) CONTINUES  
COLLECTING INFORMATION AND MAKING PRESENTATIONS  
TO THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT. IN THE LAST SEVERAL  
WEEKS ITS REPRESENTATIVES HAVE MET WITH MEMBERS  
OF THE SUPREME COURT, CALLED ON MINISTRY OF  
INTERIOR'S DIRECTOR OF INTERNAL SECURITY, SAN  
ROMAN, AND MET WITH NAVY CHIEF MASSERA'S PERSONAL  
SECRETARY, CAPTAIN SARATEQUI.

THE FDD ISSUES PERIODIC PETIONS CALLING FOR  
THE LOCATING OF THE DISAPPEARED, RECOGNITION OF  
THOSE SECRETLY DETAINED, FREEING DETAINEES HELD  
WITHOUT CHARGES, RESTORING THE CONSTITUTIONAL  
RIGHT OF OPTION AND JUDGING THOSE CHARGED IN  
ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSTITUTION AND NATIONAL  
LAWS. THE FDD'S JUNE REPORT STATED THAT IT HAD  
RECORDED 116 DISAPPEARANCE CASES THIS YEAR THROUGH  
THE END OF MAY--37 FROM THE FEDERAL CAPITAL, 64  
FROM BUENOS AIRES PROVINCE AND 11 CASES FROM THE  
INTERIOR.

3. PERMANENT ASSEMBLY----

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THE PERMANENT ASSEMBLY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (APDH)  
HAS BEEN VERY ACTIVE. IT SUFFERED A MAJOR SETBACK  
WHEN ITS SECOND APPEAL TO THE SUPREME COURT IN  
THE CASE OF SMITH VS. VIDELA WAS REJECTED RECENTLY  
FOR LACK OF JURISDICTION. THE ASSEMBLY LAST WEEK  
PRESENTED ANOTHER LIST OF 500 MORE DISAPPEARED  
PERSONS TO THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR, BRINGING THE  
TOTAL OF PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED DISAPPEARED CASES TO JUST OVER  
3,000. (ASSEMBLY MEMBERS ALSO PUBLICLY CORRECTED  
THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR'S PREVIOUS REBUTTAL  
REGARDING A NUMBER OF THE CASES ON THE MAY 17  
LA PRENSA LIST.)

THE ASSEMBLY'S MORE OPEN AND AGGRESSIVE  
POLICY HAS GAINED IT INCREASED MANPOWER AND LOCAL  
FINANCIAL SUPPORT. IT HAS JUST MOVED TO MORE  
SPACIOUS OFFICES. MORE VOLUNTEER WORKERS ARE  
AVAILABLE AND FUNDS ARE MORE AVAILABLE.

THE NEXT MAJOR TASK OF THE ASSEMBLY IS TO  
DECIDE HOW IT CAN BEST SUPPORT THE INTER-AMERICAN  
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION REPORT WRITING PROJECT  
ON ARGENTINA. TWO PROPOSALS WILL BE PUT FORWARD  
FOR CONSIDERATION IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE. THE

FIRST IS FOR THE ASSEMBLY TO PROVIDE THE IAHRC  
COPIES OF THE 3,000 PLUS SIGNED DISAPPEARANCE  
CASE TESTIMONIALS WHICH IT HAS ON FILE. SECOND  
IS THE PROPOSAL FOR THE ASSEMBLY TO FINANCE THE  
TRAVEL TO WASHINGTON OF WITNESSES TO APPEAR  
BEFORE THE INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION.  
(THE ASSEMBLY'S JUDGMENT IS THAT IAHRC VISIT IS NOT GOING TO  
TAKE PLACE.) (SEE SEPTTEL).  
A CHANGE IN MOOD HAS TAKEN PLACE AT THE  
ASSEMBLY ITS EARLIER CONCERNS THAT THE PUBLIC  
WOULD CONVIENITLY FORGET THE DISAPPEAR-  
ANCE ISSUE APPEAR TO HAVE SUBSIDED. THE LARGE AMOUNT OF  
PRESS ATTENTION DURING THE MUNDIAL, TO ARGENTINE HUMAN RIGHTS  
ORGANIZATIONS, THE NAVY'S PROPOSAL FOR A LIST OF THE DEAD,  
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STRONGER U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS INITIATIVES, RENEWED  
LEGAL EFFORTS AND THE UPCOMING INTER-AMERICAN  
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION'S STUDY PLUS A REPORTEDLY

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R 181233Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7044

INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES 6407

POSITIVE RESPONSE FROM LOCAL POLITICAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS OBSERVERS  
TO THE MAY 17 PUBLICATION IN LA PRENSA OF THE LIST OF THE DISAPPEARED  
S  
ARE ALL FACTORS ENCOURAGING THE ASSEMBLY'S LEADERSHIP.

4. SOCIALIST WORKERS' PARTY----

THE SOCIALIST WORKERS' PARTY (PST) RECENTLY APPEALED TO THE ARGENTINE SUPREME COURT ASKING FOR ITS INTERVENTION IN REMEDYING THE SERIOUS SITUATION FACED BY ITS MEMBERSHIP. THE PARTY'S BRIEF, WHICH CLOSELY FOLLOWED THE LINES OF THE PERMANENT ASSEMBLY'S ARGUMENT IN THE SMITH CASE, POINTS OUT THAT 55 MEMBERS OF THE PST HAVE DISAPPEARED SINCE MARCH 1976 BECAUSE OF THEIR NON-VIOLENT SOCIALIST PRINCIPLES. THE BRIEF POINTS OUT THAT ALTHOUGH THE HABEAS CORPUS PETITIONS FILED IN THE INDIVIDUAL CASES RECEIVED NEGATIVE REPLIES BY THE EXECUTIVE, THERE IS SUBSTANTIAL EVIDENCE INDICATING THAT THE DETENTIONS OF THE PST MEMBERS WERE IN FACT UNDERTAKEN BY AGENTS OF THE EXECUTIVE POWER.

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5. AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL ATTACKED----

AMNESTY, WHICH HAS NO LOCAL CHAPTER, HAS BEEN THE FOCUS OF SEVERE PRESS CRITICISM IN RECENT WEEKS. THE JULY 7 ISSUE OF CONFIRMADO CONTAINED AN ARTICLE ATTACKING AMNESTY FOR ITS ALLEGED LEFTIST BIAS. THE ARTICLE POINTED OUT THAT OF 18 STUDIES CONDUCTED BY AI IN '76 AND '77--ONLY TWO DEALT WITH MARXIST COUNTRIES.

ON AUGUST 1, LA NACION RAN AN EFE WIRE STORY REPORTING THAT AN AI SPOKESMAN IN BONN HAD ADMITTED THAT AMNESTY MAINTAINS A DANISH CENTER FOR THE "TORTURE OF PIGS DESIGNED TO GAIN KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE APPLICATION OF ELECTRICITY." THIS STORY RECEIVED FURTHER PLAY ON AT LEAST ONE MAJOR RADIO STATION LATER IN THE WEEK.

FINALLY, THE ARCHBISHOP PLAZA OF LA PLATA MADE PUBLIC IN LATE JULY HIS REPLY TO AN AMNESTY USA INQUIRY ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN ARGENTINA. THE ARCHBISHOP'S RHETORICAL RESPONSE ASKED WHAT WAS HAPPENING IN THE UNITED STATES WITH RESPECT TO PUERTO RICANS, AMERICAN INDIANS, THE ASSASSINS OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY AND MARTIN LUTHER KING, ABORTION, AND THE EXPORT OF BIRTH CONTROL DEVICES AND TECHNOLOGY.  
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## Message Attributes

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